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COACHES - Van Chancellor

COACH BIO



Van Chancellor

College - Mississippi State '65

In his first five years of professional coaching, Van Chancellor has continued to raise the star excellence within the arena of women's basketball. After being named the Head Coach and C Manager of the WNBA's Houston franchise on April 29, 1997, Chancellor guided the Comets WNBA Championships. Entering his sixth season with the Comets, Chancellor owns a 117-3 regular-season mark and a 16-5 (.762) record in the playoffs.

Chancellor, who is the only head coach in the WNBA to have been with his original team since the league's inception in 1997, has received many accolades as the Comets head coach. He earned WNBA Coach of the Year honor in consecutive seasons (1997-1999) and has been named head coach of the Western Conference All-Star team in straight years (1999-2001). His best efforts as a coach are evident by both his record and the accomplishments of individual players. Chancellor's exceptional coaching career in the WNBA, and in college, was recognized when he was inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame on June 9, 2001.

Despite the loss of reigning league MVP, Sheryl Swoopes, to a season-ending knee injury and the retirement of Cooper, Chancellor led his team to a 19-13 mark in 2001 and a fifth consecutive trip to the playoffs. In addition, Arcain earned the WNBA Most Improved Player award and Tina Thompson became just the fifth player in WNBA history to record 2,000 points.

During the 2000 season, Chancellor and the Comets won their fourth consecutive WNBA Championship and only professional sports franchise in the United States in the past decade to win four straight titles. The Comets finished the regular season with a 27-5 record and a perfect 6-0 mark in the playoffs. Individual honors went to Swoopes, who won her first-ever WNBA Most Valuable Player award and was named as the league's Defensive Player of the Year. She was also named MVP of the WNBA Championship series for the fourth consecutive time.

Chancellor and his team spent the 1999 season on an emotional roller coaster. In February, the team's starting guard, Kim Perrot, was diagnosed with cancer and began a difficult battle with the disease that ended on August 32. Despite the tragic loss of a friend, Chancellor helped guide the team to a 26-6 regular-season record and a WNBA Championship.

In 1998, the Comets set numerous league records en route to a decisive 27-3 finish and a second WNBA title. The team's .900 winning percentage in the regular season is the best finish in the history of professional basketball by a women's team. Houston also recorded 15 consecutive wins between June 27 and July 30, which is the longest streak in WNBA history. Individual honors followed the team's success, as Cooper captured her second straight WNBA Most Valuable Player award. Following the season, Chancellor coached the 1998 WNBA Touring Team, a squad of elite WNBA players who competed against the best teams in Brazil.

In his first year with the Comets, Chancellor led the team to an 18-10 mark, the best record in the league, and won three consecutive conference titles. The inaugural season was one of unpredictability for Chancellor as Houston's franchise player, Swoopes, was on the sidelines expecting her first child. Left with a lineup of players that included first-round draft pick Thompson and Brazilian phenomenon Arcain, Chancellor used his coaching skills and player development to help produce a championship team.

In addition to his coaching experience in the WNBA, Chancellor will have the opportunity to represent his country as coach of the 2002 USA Basketball Women's World Championship Team. Named to his position on November 1, Chancellor's USA squad will compete in the 14th FIBA World Championship for Women, September 14-25, in Nanjing, Republic of China.

Before joining the professional ranks, Chancellor spent 19 successful seasons as the head coach of the University of Mississippi Lady Rebels. Under his guidance, the Lady Rebels posted a winning percentage of .740 (439-150) in 589 NCAA Tournament appearances and became recognized as one of the premier women's basketball programs in the nation. As a collegiate coach, Chancellor ranks 14th in all-time winning percentage amongst women's basketball coaches. Chancellor, who was named SEC Coach of the Year on three occasions (1987, 1990, 1992), never had a losing record at Ole Miss despite competing in one of the toughest conferences in the nation. In addition, his 1991-92 team won the program's first-ever SEC regular-season championship.

Chancellor played two years of basketball at East Central Junior College in Decatur, MS. Chancellor later transferred to Mississippi State, where he earned a bachelor's degree in math and physical education in 1965. He also entered coaching ranks during his senior year at Mississippi State, serving as head coach of the boy's basketball team at Noxapater High School. Chancellor went on to coach boy's and girl's basketball at Horn Lake High School and Central High School in Mississippi. Chancellor received his master's degree in physical education from the University of Mississippi in 1973.

Born September 27, 1943, in Louisville, Mississippi, Chancellor and his wife, Betty, live in Houston and have John and Renee, and four grandsons, Nicholas (4), Jacob (3), Joseph (1) and Zachary (1). A book published in 1999, "Nothin' But a Champion," chronicles Chancellor's life from his childhood in Mississippi through his third championship with the Houston Comets. In addition to his coaching duties, Chancellor works during the off-season as a television color analyst for Southeastern Conference women's basketball.

CAREER COACHING

YEAR	TEAM	REGULAR SEASON			POST SEASON	
		WINS	LOSSES	PCT	WINS	LOSSES
1997	Houston	18	10	.643	2	0
1998	Houston	27	3	.900	4	1
1999	Houston	26	6	.813	4	2
2000	Houston	27	5	.844	6	0
2001	Houston	19	13	.594	0	2
2002	Houston	24	8	.750	1	2
2003	Houston	20	14	.588	1	2
2004	Houston	12	17	.414	0	0
TOTALS		173	76	.695	18	9

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